

**MASTER OF ARTS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION
(MADE)**

00136

**Term-End Examination
June, 2014**

**MDE-413 : LEARNER SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND
SERVICES**

Time : 3 Hours

Maximum Weightage : 75%

Note : (i) *Attempt all the questions.*

(ii) *All the three questions carry equal weight.*

1. Answer **any one** of the following questions in about **1200** words :
 - (a) What are the support services offered by distance and Open learning institutions ? Discuss any three of them with examples.
 - (b) What are study skills ? Discuss the need and importance of these skills and how do these study skills help distance learners in their studies.

2. Answer **any four** of the following in about **300** words each :
 - (a) Discuss some of the key attributes and skills of a good Academic Counsellor.
 - (b) Explain the SQ3R technique and discuss its role in reading.
 - (c) What are the major functions of a study centre in an Open University ?
 - (d) Write a short note on resource-based learning.

- (e) Explain the terms 'informing', 'advising' and 'counselling' to bring out the differences in their emphasis.
- (f) Discuss different measures to reduce students' attrition in distance education system.

3. Answer the following question :

The following is an excerpt from an actual assignment response (See Appendix I). Write your marginal comments in the margin provided and global comments on the assessment sheet enclosed. Award a grade to the assignment response on a five point scale, using letter grade A, B, C, D and E : The notional correlates of these letter grades respectively are excellent, very good, good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory.

After evaluation, attach the evaluated script and the 'Assessment Sheet' with your examination answer sheet. Award a grade in the box provided and also write the global comments on the assessment sheet.

NOTE : PLEASE TEAR OFF THIS APPENDIX
(ASSIGNMENT RESPONSE) AND ATTACH
TO YOUR ANSWER SHEET

Enrolment No:

Grade:

APPENDIX - I

MDE - 413 : Learner Support Systems and Services

Space for Comments

Assignment Response

- Q.** Suggest ways and means to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the context of training.
- A.** **Ways and means to bridge the gap**
Training undoubtedly, is essential for getting best results in any job or profession training teachers, an individual or even group to go about the assigned work in a systematic order. Also training gives a first hand experience of the job. Merely theoretical knowledge about a job might make an individual adds a totally new dimension to his/her knowledge as it provides skills required for handling the job in reality. It is in view of these factors that Meacham champions the importance of training even of it happens to be of small duration or in phases.

In an ideal situation training equips an individual or group completely to undertake the job responsibility. But more often than not such an ideal expectation remains only kind of wishful thinking.

The following aspects, in Meacham's opinion are to be considered carefully before undertaking any staff development of training programme.

Structural and instructional parameters of designing distance teaching materials, and the stages of concern of the faculty members.

Structural Parameters :

This necessitates a thought about the function of the course. Aims and objectives of the course/courses are to be specified in clear terms. Attention also has to be paid to the available modes of instruction as well as the choice of the pedagogic structure. A careful study about how to be done the location of the subject in a given course. Some thought also has to be devoted to dwell over teacher characteristics, student characteristics and the professional assistance available viz. Layout, graphics, copyright, text design etc.

Instruction Parameters :

Student motivation is the uppermost area under consideration in this section. In addition to course designing, goal definition, cognitive structuring feedback and assessment and evaluation are the aspects which next to be properly covered.

Meacham believes that these parameters cannot be satisfied merely through workshops, verbal instructions, administrative admonitions etc. Improvement or effectiveness of any course is possible only through 'improving' the individuals, their aptitude and their experience. If the developmental stages of an individual fail to match with the orientation/training, the programme may not achieve its goals. It is therefore, advisable to identify the level of concern of a particular faculty member or team and then arrange a training programme.

But usually no training programme takes into account the individual concerns of the staff member. Rather the whole exercise in the name of training is carried out in a stereotype manner.

Some measures to make training effective and thereby bridge the gap between theory and practice are mentioned below :

Identify the levels of concern of the staff : these concerns include -

- (a) **Impact concerns** : This means that the staff member should be really kept to make an impact.
- (b) **Task concerns** : He/She should be aware about the means to be employed to carry out his/her ideas.
- (c) **Self concerns** : The person should be willing to participate in the programme.

Meacham rightly believes that 'structural' and 'instructional' parameters are linked with the higher level of concern 'i.e. impact' concerns and 'task' have to be 'sensitized' to the needs of the training in an informal manner.

- (i) **Design Programmes according to the needs of the selected individuals** : No training should be imposed on individuals rather it should be designed according to the need of his/her job.
- (ii) **Accountability** : At the end of every training programme there should be some kind of accountability on the part of the trainee. He/she should be forced to go through the training seriously and deliver the goods as expected.
- (iii) **Incentives** : There should be some kind of incentives in terms of increment or promotion after training programmes.

- (iv) **Compulsory Test of Examination at the end of the training :** Every training programmers should conclude with some kind of evaluation or assessment system. This will force the trainees to realize the value of the training and so take it seriously. For example, UGC insists upon lecturers attending refresher or orientation courses for being eligible for future promotions. There is heavy demand for these subject specific courses. But there remains a question mark in terms of real learning or effectiveness of these courses mainly because the participants face no evaluation at the end of the course. Even passive participants get the same certificate, and eligibility as a brilliant and active participant of the course.
Penalty system : There should be some kind of punishment or penalty for the trainee if he/she fails to reach the required measure of skills after the end of a course.
- (v) **Self-financing system :** Training programmes should be made self-financing for the participants so that only the genuinely interested ones join them.
- (vi) **Incentives for multiplier effect :** Those who after getting trained are able to train others should be suitably rewarded.

